



## Don Pedra in Oranjestad offers Portuguese and International Cuisine in cozy atmosphere

The Don Pedra Portuguese restaurant on the De La Sallestraat opened in July, and owners Raquel and Mirto Fernandez-Pedra announce that with the acquisition of new chef Sherman Donata they have revamped the menu to include both Aruban and international dishes. This was evident in the fried funchi with olives and bay leaves that accompanied the main course of a grilled “surf and turf.” This consisted of a sampling of the choices available when ordering the “Espetada Don Pedra,” the house specialty. Funchi is a polenta-like cornmeal concoction that is listed on the menu as “Portuguese corn bread.”

Other regional dishes to be found on the menu, which are also typically Portuguese, are “Bacalhau Avinagrado;” marinated salt cod flavored by a tangy vinaigrette sauce. On Friday evening, taste testers recruited from the Aruban press community were treated to a five-course meal at the charming restaurant, which allowed them to sample the seafood and meat specialties of the house.

Hot and cold appetizers offer a diverse choice to fans of regional cuisine, and those caring to try it for the first time. Amongst the dishes providing an international flair are a variety of freshly prepared sushi, and escargots with Parmesan cheese.

During the sample dinner, the “Sopa Don Pedra” was of particular note, a finely textured seafood soup thickened by strained potatoes, as was the regional desserts of quesillo and Pan Bollo, (bread pudding) served with a Whiskey Sauce. A “Caldo Verde,” described as a typical Portuguese potato and collard green soup, is also on the menu, and there is a “Sopa do Dia,” or Soup de Jour.

Regional dishes mean marinated and grilled kababs, and the gathering was very impressed by an actual “Espetada Don Pedra,” a huge skewer of tender steak presented by waiter Juny, which can consist of chicken, chunks of fish filet, shrimp or a combination of all four. The choice of what is on the giant skewer is up to the patron, and costs 49.50 Aruban Florins, or \$28 (U.S.) for the combination, and lessening prices depending on what is ordered. All main courses are accompanied by criollo side dishes such as plantains, funchi, and fresh vegetables that were nicely not over cooked. Other interesting dishes to be found on the menu are “Peito di Frango Recheado com Espinafre” (Chicken Breast stuffed with Spinach) and “Atum Portuguea;” described as “Portuguese tuna in a spectacular mango sauce.”

Don Pedra Restaurant will be a departure into the native experience for island visitors, and we have to comment that they are furnished with the most comfortable chairs we have ever encountered. Reservations can be made by calling 588-1285 or via e-mail at donpedra@setarnet.aw.